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The Kentucky Warbler

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WHISTLING SWANS AT POYNTER'S LAKE

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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OUR COVER

The excellent photograph of the Whistling Swans, by Jimmy Lowe, Glasgow Daily Times photographer, was taken at Poynter's Lake, Barren County, Kentucky. The story of these swans appeared in the February 1972 issue of *The Kentucky Warbler*. The species, a rare transient in Kentucky, was also observed in Warren County, by Dr. Herbert E. Shadowen (see details elsewhere in this issue). Special thanks are due Mr. Lowe and the Glasgow Daily Times for the use of the photograph.

1971 KENTUCKY SUMMER BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

BURT L. MONROE, JR.

In our sixth year of participation in the nation-wide Summer Breeding Bird Survey conducted through the Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky continues to be one of the best covered states. During these six consecutive years, we have taken from 30 to 39 of the 46 possible assigned counts for the state; in 1971, 33 counts were made by Edwin Larson, Clell Peterson, Herbert Shadowen, Rufus Reed, A. L. Whitt, A. M. Reece, E. E. Schroeder, Howard Jones, Lawrence Smith, Joseph Croft, Russell Starr, Bert Powell, R. W. Head, C. C. Gatlin, C. L. Frazer, Anne L. Stamm, W. R. Kingsolver, and myself, plus an unheralded number of unsung heroes, the recorders.

At the time of the publication of the report on the 1969 survey, national analyses of the counts were available for the counts made in 1966 through 1968. Currently, the 1969 analysis is now available and will form the basis for national trends mentioned later; Kentucky material will represent figures obtained from the 1971 counts.

Twelve species were recorded on all 33 of the 1971 Kentucky counts (Bobwhite, Chimney Swift, Barn Swallow, Robin, Starling, Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, House Sparrow, Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Field Sparrow); in comparison to last year, the swift, swallow and towhee are new to this list, while missing are the Crow and Common Grackle. Ten species appeared on all but one count (Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Crow, Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird, Catbird, Eastern Bluebird, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird); the Eastern Meadowlark missed but two counts. All other species were recorded on 30 or fewer of the counts.

Of the ten commonest species reported from the state (based on total numbers of individuals recorded), all but one (Bobwhite) showed an increase over last year. These ten species, in order of abundance, are Common Grackle (5648), Eastern Meadowlark (2672), Red-winged Blackbird (2594), Starling (2487), House Sparrow (2419), Indigo Bunting (1948), Cardinal (1556), Mourning Dove (1429), Bobwhite (1261), and Barn Swallow (1235). Increases, by the way, are measured on the basis of numbers per count; thus the fact that in 1971 three more counts were taken than in 1970 has no bearing on abundance comparisons. Whether these increases are the result of actual population increases or are a reflection of increased efficiency of observers is not known; I would suspect a combination of both factors. The only newcomer to the top ten this year is the Barn Swallow which, significantly, is also the only primarily insectivorous bird. There seems to be little doubt that our bird populations are becoming more dominated by the seed- and plant-eaters, with a corresponding general decrease in insectivores.

The most frequently recorded species in Kentucky in 1971 was again the Indigo Bunting, appearing at 1022 of the 1650 stops made on the 33 counts. This represents a report at almost two out of three stops throughout the state. Before the advent of these summer counts, we had no idea of the actual widespread abundance of the species; indeed, even bird-watchers

sometimes fail to record it during a summer trip. Other species in the top ten for frequency of observation are Eastern Meadowlark (943), Common Grackle (942), Cardinal (833), Bobwhite (708), Red-winged Blackbird (690), Mourning Dove (679), Field Sparrow (653), Mockingbird (576), and Starling (546). What surprises most people about this array of species is the high position in the list of Indigo Bunting, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobwhite, and Field Sparrow, the low position (tenth) of the Starling, and the absence of the House Sparrow altogether. These latter two introduced species are much more concentrated around habitation and are not recorded on many of the stops away from towns and farms.

Kentucky is, for analytical purposes, considered to be part of the "Central Region," an area comprising 22 states and provinces from Manitoba and Ontario south to Alabama and Texas. On the basis of comparisons between the 1968 and 1969 counts, the following significant changes in bird populations occurred in this region: a highly significant (99% probability limits) decrease in the Red-headed Woodpecker and significant (95% probability) changes in populations of the Robin (increase), Yellow Warbler (decrease), and American Goldfinch (decrease). The Red-headed Woodpecker was down 27%, Robin up 18%, Yellow Warbler down 36%, and American Goldfinch down 26%. These changes, with the exception of the woodpecker, are reflected in the Kentucky counts; the Red-headed Woodpecker is not a dominant bird in this state and population levels generally run low anyway. It is interesting to note that these trends on the Robin and American Goldfinch have continued, with 1971 levels showing a further increase in the former and decline in the latter; the Yellow Warbler has remained relatively stable since 1969.

On a continent-wide basis, the following changes were noted between 1968 and 1969: highly significant (99% probability) changes in Wood Thrush (increase 25%), Starling (increase 20%), and American Goldfinch (decrease 24%); significant changes (95% probability) in Yellow-billed Cuckoo (increase 16%), Yellow-shafted Flicker (increase 15%), Red-headed Woodpecker (decrease 19%), Western Meadowlark (increase 20%), and Red-winged Blackbird (decrease 10%). Increases in the Wood Thrush and Yellow-shafted Flicker, are reflections of changes in the southeastern states, while those affecting the Starling, Western Meadowlark, and Red-winged Blackbird stem mainly from the western region.

It is interesting once again to compare Kentucky with other states on this continent, based on the 1969 counts. As a state, and on the basis of the figure of number of individuals of each species recorded per count, we led the nation with six species. Tops was the *Indigo Bunting*, which was noted in Kentucky at the rate of 53 individuals per count; closest to us was Tennessee with 41, all other states rating lower than 32. Next in line was *Field Sparrow* with 30 per count, out-distancing Ohio with 20 and all others with fewer than 19. *Yellow-breasted Chat* followed with 21 (Alabama and Tennessee recorded 17), then *Eastern Bluebird* with 12 (Oklahoma with 9 was second), *Chimney Swift* with 21 (Alabama with 19), and *Yellow-billed Cuckoo* with 12 tied Arkansas and Tennessee. In our Central Region, when compared with the other 21 states and provinces, Kentucky led for Barn Swallow (33 per count, Kansas with 26 was second) and Common Grackle (164, Illinois next with 161); we also tied for tops in six other species, Red-bellied Woodpecker (9), Downy Woodpecker (3) Eastern Phoebe (3),

Acadian Flycatcher (3), Eastern Wood Pewee (7), and Catbird (8). For breeding bird populations, we continue to be an excellent state.

Several of Kentucky's counts still remain unassigned. With the large amount of interest and quantity of good birders, we should be able to reach 100% coverage. If anyone is interested in becoming a participant in this program, he should contact me as soon as possible.—Biology Department, University of Louisville, Louisville 40208.

MIGRATING HAWKS OVER SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY

ANNE L. STAMM

In the fall of 1971 I made a trip to the mountains of southeastern Kentucky to check for migrating hawks; this paper reports on the results of that trip. My husband, Frederick, accompanied me and our visit covered principally the ridges of Cumberland Mountain, Bell County, as well as the valley along and adjacent to and within the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Although some bird studies have been made on the mountains of southeastern Kentucky, no one, to my knowledge, has previously investigated the possibility of autumn hawk flights. With this purpose in mind, we spent the period of September 21 (late afternoon) to September 24, 1971, looking for migrating hawks.

We arrived at the "Pinnacle" on Cumberland Mountain, above Middlesboro, about 5:30 p.m. (EST) on September 21 and although we noted four Broad-winged Hawks (*Buteo platypterus*), our chief objective was to determine the most suitable observation point or lookout for the following days.

The next morning a heavy mist hung over the valley until 11:30 a.m. The day was cool and the temperature ranged from 51 to 70 degrees. The wind came from the northeast at 5 m.p.h. and the humidity was 69%. We remained in the valley until 11:15 a.m. when we saw our first hawk, flying south, just over Log Mountain. This prompted us to go to a higher elevation at well over 2,000 feet and even higher than 2,500 feet. Suddenly we noticed a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), then four unidentified hawks loomed before us. They appeared as ghosts from behind the clouds. Our excitement began to mount as we saw 15 Broad-winged Hawks coming from the north and seemingly "sailing" on effortless wings. I knew other hawks would follow as this has always been the pattern with small groups which I have seen since 1956 (*Ky War.*, 33:42-43, 1957; 42:51-52, 1966; *Aud. Field Notes*, 23:64, 1969). The hawks continued to drift by singly and in pairs; occasionally three and four would come into view, then disappear behind a cloud.

The big movement, however, did not occur until 4:21 p.m., when a large flock of 115 Broad-wings came into view. They were circling high above the ridge tops, making use of the uplifting air currents, and making their way with a minimum of effort that carried them in a south to southeasterly direction. Three minutes later 27 more Broad-wings followed the same path. The flocks were milling around in circular fashion and then drifting in majestic flight on their way south to their tropical wintering grounds. At

4:41 p.m. we counted 161 Broad-winged Hawks, with 12 additional hawks following soon afterward. The day's tally totaled 472 hawks!

It rained on September 23, beginning with a fine mist at 7:30 a.m., with heavy rain at 10:00 a.m. which continued throughout the day. We saw only four hawks as clouds and rain obscured the sky.

Although the rain stopped on the morning of September 24, the mountain ridges were not visible as they were veiled in mist until 10:00 a.m. The wind at 9 m.p.h. came from the northeast. We checked the valley and saw three Broad-winged Hawks flying low, below the ridges, near the Middlesboro area. Thereafter, every five or ten minutes a few Broad-winged Hawks were visible. At 11:35 a.m. a group of 40 of this species appeared and suddenly disappeared behind clouds. The sun was bright by this time and patches of white, fleecy clouds dotted the sky here and there. Shortly before noon a group of 61 and then a long line of 84 Broad-wings continued to sail across the blue sky and drifted south to southwest. We stopped watching at 12:30 p.m. since we had to return home because of other commitments.

On the two good days, when the weather permitted, we counted a total of 781 hawks: 726 Broad-wings, 8 Cooper's, 4 Sharp-shinned (*Accipiter striatus*), 1 Red-tailed (*Buteo jamaicensis*), 1 Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), 4 unidentified accipiters, 14 unidentified buteos, 1 unidentified falcon, and 22 unidentified hawks. Also, we saw seven Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*). The Osprey flew rather low, just over the ridge, and then on into Tennessee in a southwesterly direction. As far as I know, this is the first fall record for the Osprey in Bell County. The sightings of the Turkey Vultures are equally significant since this species is considered uncommon in Bell County.

An interesting observation was that on September 22 the hawks flew in a more southerly to slightly southeasterly direction, while on the 24th the birds were flying above Log Mountain and drifted south to southwest.

There is nothing quite as spectacular in the bird world as the sight of migrating hawks, particularly Broad-winged, as they mill about in circular fashion against a blue sky and then disappear behind fleecy white clouds only to emerge again and then sail or coast southward. We intend to continue our observations again next fall and hope to spend more time in the area.—9101 Spokane Way, Louisville 40222.

A SUMMARY OF K.O.S. SPRING FIELD TRIPS AT BOWLING GREEN, 1956-1972

HERBERT E. SHADOWEN

The Kentucky Ornithological Society has conducted field trips in the Bowling Green area since 1956, with the exception of 1971, when the Society held a joint meeting with the Tennessee Ornithological Society, at Mammoth Cave National Park. Much has been written about these meetings and the two temporary lakes south of Bowling Green by Dr. Gordon Wilson, who began making regular studies of the area in 1927. This summary is largely the work of Dr. Wilson, who was a source of companionship and inspiration to the writer. K.O.S. members have also enjoyed observing birds in other sections of Warren County, particularly near the country home of Dr. L. Y. Lancaster. The 1967 spring meeting included a rewarding trip to Dr. Russell Starr's farm south of Glasgow. This compilation represents the efforts of many K.O.S. members.

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Total Species</i>	<i>Aquatic Species</i>
April 14-15, 1956	120	37
April 13-14, 1957	102	29
April 12-13, 1958	96	23
April 18-19, 1959	100	15
April 23-24, 1960	107	15
April 7- 9, 1961	100	31
April 27-29, 1962	120	22
April 19-21, 1963	118	21
April 11-12, 1964	112	29
April 10-11, 1965	127	30
Mar. 19-20, 1966	69	10
April 15-16, 1967	112	21
April 20-21, 1968	126	27
April 12-13, 1969	101	17
April 18-19, 1970	114	23
April 15-16, 1972	139	37

Ten aquatic species have been recorded only once in the 16 years. These include the Snow Goose (1956), Oldsquaw (1964), Sandhill Crane (1961), Upland Plover (1957), Knot (1963), Baird's Sandpiper (1963), Dowitcher (1963), Sanderling (1963), Forster's Tern (1960), and Cattle Egret (1972).

Those recorded twice include the Common Loon, Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, European Widgeon, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, American Woodcock, and Ring-billed Gull. Species recorded three years include the Common Egret, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, American Bittern, American Golden Plover, and Bonaparte's Gull. Three aquatic species have been observed on all 16 counts; these are the Blue-winged Teal, Killdeer, and Lesser Yellowlegs.

The greatest number of species recorded at a Bowling Green spring meeting was in 1972, and this was largely attributed to a fortunate coincidence of conditions. The water level was high at Chaney's Lake but low at McElroy's Lake, exposing expanses of mud flat. The weather was warm and unstable, but birding conditions were good much of the time, and several migrants were seen.

Below is the list of birds recorded on April 15 and 16, 1972: Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Least Bittern, American Bittern, Cattle Egret, Mallard, Black Duck, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Shoveler, Wood Duck, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Osprey, Sparrow Hawk, Bobwhite, American Coot, Killdeer, American Golden Plover, Common Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Ring-billed Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House Wren, Bewick's Wren, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Solitary Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, American Redstart, House Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Song Sparrow.—Biology Department, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green 42101.

SPRING MEETING, APRIL 14-16, 1972

The Kentucky Ornithological Society held its forty-ninth Spring Meeting at Midtown Holiday Inn in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on Friday-Sunday, April 14-16, 1972.

The first session was opened Friday evening by the president, Dr. Raymond Nall. After welcoming those present he introduced Dr. Burt L. Monroe, Jr., who was in charge of the program.

Dr. Roger W. Barbour announced that the University of Kentucky Press plans to publish a volume on *Birds and Bird Finding in Kentucky*. He said that he will edit the book, but Dr. Clell Peterson, Dr. Herbert E. Shadowen, and Professor A. L. Whitt, Jr., will write the "where to go" section. Members were asked to donate color slides for the publication.

Mrs. F. W. Stamm reported on the Kentucky Ornithological Society's seventh year of participation in the North American Nest-Record Card Program sponsored by Cornell University. Although all 1971 nest-records have not been received, she said that a total of 1683 nests were reported to Cornell. Over 6,000 nests have been reported by KOS since the initiation of the program. Mrs. Stamm urged participants to strive for precise data on cavity-nesting species.

Dr. Herbert E. Shadowen gave an illustrated talk on the blackbird roost in Warren County. He mentioned some of the problems the property owners encountered as a result of the roost. Also, he told of a citizens committee which had been formed to discuss various methods to disperse the flock.

Dr. Clell Peterson gave a report on Cliff Swallow nests which he had observed in the areas of Kentucky Dam, Pickwick Dam, and Muscle Shoals. His talk was illustrated with color slides.

Dr. Burt L. Monroe, Jr., gave a report on the 1971 KOS Breeding Survey (June 1971) conducted in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service. Thirty-three people participated in the counts. He urged members to participate in the bird counts and listed nine unassigned areas in Bell, Greenup, Henderson, Hopkins, Monroe, Pike, Union, Warren, and Wayne Counties. Mr. Tom Erwin volunteered to take the Ballard County area.

Dr. Shadowen announced the field trips for the next morning, and the meeting was adjourned.

Early Saturday morning observers met in the parking lot of the Holiday Inn and traveled to McElroy and Chaney Lakes. The group reassembled at noon for a picnic lunch at a roadside park on the Nashville Road.

At the Executive Board Meeting at 3:30 p.m., the members voted that the 1973 Spring Meeting be held in Bowling Green, April 13-15, 1973.

The dinner meeting was held at the Holiday Inn at 6:30 p.m., with Dr. Nall presiding. After welcoming the members and guests, he introduced

the members of the executive board. He then called for the following announcements:

Mr. Leonard C. Brecher urged the members to write to Senator John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky and Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee to amend SB 3349 to prohibit motorized vehicles in the proposed Big South Fork National River Recreation Area.

Mrs. Stamm announced that the KOS Board decided that all individual birds as well as species be counted on the Spring Counts since this would be much more meaningful over a period of years, and she urged the compilers to send their reports to her for publication in *The Kentucky Warbler*.

Dr. Nall then introduced Dr. Wendell Kingsolver, who spoke on "Birds of Mexico," and showed beautiful color slides that he and his family had made on a recent trip to that country.

Dr. Monroe compiled the bird list for the day, and 123 species were reported.

Respectfully submitted
Emily H. Wilson
Recording Secretary



Some K.O.S. members stop to chat about a Prothonotary Warbler they had seen along the mouth of the Gaspar River on Dr. Herbert Shadowen's field trip, April 16, 1972.

ATTENDANCE AT THE SPRING MEETING, 1972

ANCHORAGE: Dr. and Mrs. Burt L. Monroe, Jr.

BOWLING GREEN: George Ray, Dr. and Mrs. Herbert Shadowen, Mrs. Eugene Wilson.

CARLISLE: Dr. and Mrs. Wendell R. Kingsolver and their children Robert, Barbara, and Ann.

GLASGOW: Mrs. George Ellis, Mrs. James Gillenwater, Dr. and Mrs. Russell Starr.

GOLDEN POND: Dr. Raymond Nall.

LEXINGTON: Dr. and Mrs. Roger Barbour.

LOUISVILLE: Amelia Alford, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Brecher, Mrs. M. L. Daubard, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Jackson, Mrs. H. V. Noland, James Pasikowski, Mrs. C. A. Robertson, Lawrence Smith, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Stamm, Mrs. A. G. Susie.

MADISONVILLE: Sue Place, Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Travis, Irene Wells.

MACEO: Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Powell.

MURRAY: Joe Tom Erwin, C. Wesley Kemper, Michael Miller, Dr. Clell T. Peterson.

OWENSBORO: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Abrams, Jr. and children Pamela and Phelicia, Sister Casimir Czurlles, Wynema Sims, Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Wilson.

RICHMOND: Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Whitt.

SOMERSET: David J. Fassler.

BOONEVILLE, IND.: Donald Andrews, Willard Gray, Robert McCormick.

TENNYSON, IND.: Kim Neese, Tim Neese.

PINCONNING, MICH.: Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Leggett.

FIELD NOTES

WHISTLING SWANS IN WARREN COUNTY

In the February 1972 issue of *The Kentucky Warbler*, Mrs. Marquita Gillenwater reported the occurrence of Whistling Swans (*Olor columbianus*) in Warren County in December 1971 - January 1972. On the afternoon of February 17, 1972, Dr. L. Y. Lancaster and I journeyed to the temporary lakes south of Bowling Green, Warren County. Several waterfowl were observed, including four Whistling Swans. One swan was immature. Many

ducks took flight when we arrived, but the swans swam leisurely to the distant side of the temporary lake and continued feeding and preening. They were seen on four weekly field trips and were last recorded on March 10. It appears likely that these were the same swans reported earlier in Barren County.—HERBERT E. SHADOWEN, Biology Department, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green 42101.

WHIMBREL AT KENTUCKY DAM

On May 12, 1972, around 5:15 p.m., I was observing gulls in the area immediately below Kentucky Dam. The day was overcast, temperature around 70 degrees, and the wind very light from the southeast. Light conditions were fair. I had parked my car on the west side of the river (Marshall County) just off an asphalt road which closely parallels the bank about one-half mile below the dam, when my attention was drawn to a bird approaching from the south at a height of about 200 yards. Immediately evident as I observed the bird through 7X binoculars was a moderately long, decurved beak. The bird, sailing on fixed wings, made a long, semi-circular sweep over the field to the west of the road, and, along with a smaller bird flying with it, alighted on the asphalt pavement some 150 yards south of my position. After examining both birds momentarily, I identified the smaller as a Black-bellied Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*) in full nuptial plumage. The larger bird was unmistakably of the genus *Numenius*. After consulting both standard identification manuals, I decided on the basis of bill length alone that the larger bird was clearly a Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*), formerly called the Hudsonian Curlew. I then started my car and drove slowly toward the birds, stopping twice to observe them before finally halting within 30 yards of their position. After I had studied the birds for around two minutes from this distance they were flushed by an approaching car and flew directly away from me over the river before finally turning north and, after gaining considerable altitude, disappearing from view.

My main concern when observing the larger bird at close range was to establish whether or not the head was streaked, but due to our relative positions—the bird stood in full profile during the entire period of observation—I was unable to do so. A dark eye stripe was apparent, but here as well, though I repeatedly consulted both identification manuals, the distinction was simply not conclusive to me. Fortunately, however, the bird's coloration was clearly discernible and was definitely not of the cinnamon or rufous hue of the Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*). I noted at the time that while larger than the nearby plover, the bird was not extremely so, its bulk being almost half again that of the smaller bird and its length, disregarding bill, about three to four inches greater.

Since the observation I have consulted several photographs of both species of curlews in question as well as drawings depicting the relative sizes of shore birds. All have increased my conviction that the bird was indeed a Whimbrel, a species previously unrecorded in Kentucky.

My search of the literature on the curlew, made subsequent to the sightings, revealed a pertinent behavioral trait which may be of interest. Bent, in his discussion of the Hudsonian Curlew in *Life Histories of North American Shore Birds*, part II, notes that Whimbrels "often set their wings

and scale for long distances" (p. 119). He quotes Herbert K. Job to the same effect (p. 115) and gives Mackay's observation that "these birds have a way of setting their wings stationary and sailing . . . a distance of 100 yards or more" (p. 121). Hall, in *A Gathering of Shore Birds*, reports that a Whimbrel intending to land "would have planed in on stiff wings for two hundred yards" (p. 98). These accurately describe the action of the bird I observed, and while the Long-billed Curlew may exhibit similar behavior, neither source cited above mentions such a trait.—MICHAEL G. MILLER, Route 1, Box 42, Murray 42071.

YELLOW WARBLER PARASITIZED BY COWBIRD

On May 22, 1971, while searching for active nests in Bernheim Forest, Bullitt County, I flushed a female Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) from her nest in a honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica alba*) bush. The nest was located in a three-pronged vertical fork 4.9 feet from the ground. It contained three host eggs plus one egg of the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). I was unable to return to the site until June 2, when the nest was found to contain two young warblers and one nearly-fledged Cowbird. The adult female warbler was observed feeding the nestlings. On June 7 the cowbird was not seen but the two immature warblers were on the nest. One of the nestlings fluttered off the nest at my approach and moved some three or four feet into the brush nearby. The second bird remained perched on the side of the nest. On June 10 the nest was empty and intact. No Yellow Warblers were seen that day.

Although the Yellow Warbler is described by A. C. Bent as one of the "very commonest victims" of the Brown-headed Cowbird, there seems to be no mention of such parasitism in the Kentucky literature.—LAWRENCE D. SMITH, 7010 Bearcreek Drive, B-4, Louisville 40207.

AN AUGUST NEST OF THE WOOD THRUSH

On August 8, 1971, while birding near the Nettletoth sanctuary in Cherokee Park, Louisville, Kentucky, I found a nest of the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). The nest, containing three blue eggs, was located 11 feet above the ground on a horizontal branch of an American Hornbeam tree. The nest was bulky, made of grass and leaves and interspersed with pieces of paper and plastic. I was out of the city for a few days and Mrs. Frederick W. Stamm checked the nest for me on August 10, at which time she found three newly-hatched young. On August 20 I found three well-feathered young in the nest. Two days later, August 22, one adult was on the nest with one young bird. On August 24 the nest was empty and I could not find either the young or the adults. Apparently August nesting dates of the Wood Thrush are few. Robert Mengel in *Bird of Kentucky* (1965) lists the latest hatching date as August 12, 1950, recorded by Anne L. Stamm. Therefore, I believe this record worthy of note.—JAMES PASIKOWSKI, 334 Idlewyld Drive, Louisville 40206.

COMMENTS ON THE VIRGINIA RAIL

The Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*), a rare transient in Kentucky, is a very secretive bird and seldom viewed by many observers. The species as a general rule migrates rather late in comparison to the Sora (*Porzana carolina*). Although the Virginia Rail frequents marshy areas it may also be found in wet fields. On April 22, 1972, a single bird of this species was found in a field at the edge of a new subdivision off of the Outer Loop Road, Louisville. The bird, with a broken leg, was reported to me by Mrs. Rebecca Griffith. The accompanying photograph was taken on April 23, 1972, by the author.



VIRGINIA RAIL

Two other instances of Virginia Rails being found disabled at Louisville have recently been reported. On October 9, 1969, a resident of the Highlands found one apparently dazed but otherwise uninjured in a street gutter. This bird was brought to Joseph Croft, banded by the present author, and released at Caperton's Swamp. Another was found in downtown Louisville on May 7, 1972, and reported to Burt L. Monroe, Jr.—ANNE L. STAMM, Louisville 40222.

AN UNUSUAL OBSERVATION AT A CARDINAL NEST

For the past two summers a female Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*) has used the rose arbor over the back sidewalk in our yard to build a nest. Three nests have been built, two on the same spot as the one to be reported, and one in a different area of the arbor. This summer's nesting (1971)

has been the only successful one. The two nests in 1970 had different results: one was abandoned before being used, and the eggs disappeared from the other after having been deserted by the female during an extremely heavy rain. This summer, a plastic sheet was placed over the nest area to protect the nest from heavy rain, and the fact that the female Cardinal stayed with her nest during the torrential rains (3 inches) on July 18, 1971, attested to the success of the cover. All three nests constructed in the arbor have been rather poorly built and seemed quite flimsy, but apparently were secure enough to serve the purpose.

On July 15, 1971, we found three eggs in the nest. On July 23 the eggs hatched. On July 26 we noticed an immature Cardinal began sitting on the nest while the parent bird went in search of food. The nestlings were always fed first and then the immature bird. The latter moved to the edge of the nest and stood on the side of it when the parent birds appeared, with food, to feed the young. The juvenile bird never left the nest entirely during the feeding process. The juvenile bird was in the vicinity only when the brooding parent left the nest. On July 29, the female began to fuss at the juvenile bird when bringing in the food, and the young bird would then move a few feet away to be fed, after the nestlings, then return to the nest when the parent bird flew away. The female began chasing the juvenile bird away from the nest after the early morning feeding of July 30. Thereafter, the female did not allow the young bird in the rose arbor. The nestlings left the nest on July 31 and the juvenile bird could be heard in a neighbor's yard.

We were unable to determine whether the juvenile belonged to both parents, to just one of them, or just strayed into the situation, though this is doubtful. The juvenile bird remained in the area and was later determined to be a male, as its plumage changed.—ROWLAND and VIRGINIA DURRETT, 2420 Ransdell, Louisville 40204.

NEWS AND VIEWS

If you have not returned your completed nest-record cards for 1971, please do so now. We are anxious to complete our annual KOS report and without your cooperation we can not do this. The Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell reports that during 1971, the seventh year of the Nest-record Card Program, it received information on almost 22,000 nest-record cards for that period—this total includes many from KOS members. James W. Hancock, Madisonville, reported the greatest number of nest-cards for 1971.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: SANDERLING

For the past two years, the Long Point Bird Observatory has undertaken a study on the relationship between fat deposition and fall migration in the Sanderling. In conjunction with this study, a large number of birds have been colour-marked and sightings of these marked birds away from Long

Point have indicated that most of the birds fly directly from the study area to the East Coast.

During 1972, the Observatory hopes to individually colour-mark and colour-code several hundred Sanderling in order to further investigate this phenomenon. The colour-coding will involve three aspects: colour-marking with feather dye, wing-tagging and banding with the normal aluminum band.

Birds will be feather-dyed on the breast and abdomen with one of four colours: red, yellow, green, or white (no colour); according to the percent of the bird's total body weight attributable to fat.

The birds will be wing-tagged on *each* wing with semi-permanent wing tags of the following colours: black, blue, brown, green, red, orange, yellow and white. The wing-tagging will individually identify each bird.

The placement of the aluminum band will indicate the age of the bird. Birds banded on the right leg will be adults and those banded on the left leg will be immatures.

The Observatory would be pleased if anyone sighting these birds would report the following information to us:

- Date of sighting
- Location (including nearest city or town)
- Colour of feather-dye on the breast and abdomen
- Colour of the wing tag on the right wing
- Colour of the wing tag on the left wing
- Leg on which the bird is banded.

Co-operators will receive a short note explaining the project's application to the preservation of the Long Point peninsula in a natural state and the date on which the bird was last seen on Long Point. Reports of marked birds should be sent to:

Long Point Bird Observatory,
Long Point, Ontario,
Canada.

PURPLE MARTIN SURVEY

K. O. S. has been asked to cooperate in a Purple Martin Survey sponsored by the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. The information desired includes the number of nest compartments, species occupying compartments, approximate numbers, habitat, etc. If you have a house or gourds for martins, please write the editor, immediately. A questionnaire, which has been supplied by Cornell, will be mailed to you promptly. According to Dr. James Tate, Jr., "These need not be active colonies, but could be recently inactive colonies as well."

This is one way we can all have a part in learning more about the Purple Martin's migration, the factors influencing the arrival and departure of the birds, as well as learning about the relationship between martins and their nest hole competitors.